THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

"Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with, year by year. Good deeds will shine as the stars in heaven."—J. CHALMERS.

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CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY.

FROM THE "DESERET NEWS."

"Joy to the world, the Lord will come
And earth receive her King,
Let every heart prepare Him room
And saints and angels sing."

This stanza from a favorite hymn among the Latter-day Saints heralds the second advent of the world's Redeemer, at whose first coming angels sang the famed refrain:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men."

The anniversary of that wondrous birth is held in all Christian countries on December 25th, and that day we gladly celebrate. Ancient prophecies foretold the Savior's birth as the Babe of Bethlehem, the Virgin's Son, and these are often repeated throughout Christendom: numerous predictions of His triumphant return as the King of Kings, the Lord of the whole earth, appear also in sacred writ, but they are not so often quoted, and when they are referred to are usually interpreted in a mere poetic and figurative sense. To the Latter-day Saints the language of the prophets is as literal in one case as in the other. We look for His coming and His Kingdom as certain verities, as much real as His nativity and His crucifixion. So, while we commemorate the past great event, we anticipate the future grand and glorious re-appearance of the Prince of Peace.

The preparation of the world for the consummation of the hopes

and desires of poets, sages, philosophers and seers has been in gradual progress for many centuries. The very means employed by the enemies of the Christian faith to crush it have resulted in waking up the world to contemplation of its beauties and its benefits, and lifted it high above every other religious cult and creed. The change wrought has been a miracle. Jesus of Nazareth, born in obscurity, reared in lowliness in a little village of a small country under heathen bondage, cast out as an impostor by His own tribe and race, "despised and rejected of men," condemned as a malefactor, and to a most ignominious and horrible death, is now recognised among the foremost nations as the grandest personality that ever walked the earth. His character is lauded, His example is held up for emulation, His doctrines and precepts are cited, in theory at least, as divine, and His influence for good is recognised as an ever-increasing power upon mankind.

All this shows a mighty movement towards the crowning event of this world's history—the coming of the Christ to claim His own, even dominion over the world that He redeemed and bought with His own blood. But something more is evidently needed to bring into organized form and force the varied agencies extant, into a living, potent body with definite principles and powers in unison and concord, forming a nucleus for that government over which the Anointed One shall reign. That cannot be accomplished by mere human agency. Its origin, inception and conduct must be divine. The Kingdom of God, spiritual or temporal, must be set up by Deity or it will be but the work of man. It is the mission and pleasure of the Latter-day Saints to proclaim the establishment of the Church or spiritual Kingdom of Christ, anew, to be developed into His literal earthly Kingdom at His personal advent.

While commemorating the Redeemer's birth and hailing His anticipated coming and reign, we also rejoice in the birth of His servant and prophet—the forerunner Joseph Smith, which occurred on December 23rd, 1805, to whom He appeared and upon whom He conferred authority to introduce the last dispensation and restore the fulness of His gospel with all its former doctrines, ordinances, gifts, priesthood, apostleship, orders, spirit and powers. This institution is set up. It is a living fact. It is making its way among men and nations. God is in it. Christ is its living, heavenly head, and at this Christmas time it is the chief cause of our jubilation. It is no mere dream or pleasant fancy but a veritable reality in which our lives and our labors are centered.

As the years march on we find at each Christmas celebration new cause for congratulation and satisfaction. The way is opening up for our work of gospel proclamation. Our devoted missionaries, numbering about two thousand, are gaining ground in the leading countries of the world and prejudice is giving way before the light of truth. In Great Britain, Holland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, some agitation was excited during the

past summer by designing persons against our missionaries in false reports which were echoed by many preachers and writers. The old canard was revived that young women in large numbers were being enticed to emigrate to Utah to become plural wives. The most monstrous stories of immoral conditions here were repeated from pulpit and press and a furore was aroused which threatened to drive our elders from those countries and did occasion much violence. In England appeals for stringent measures were made to the government by prelates and other prominent persons, who accepted the rumors without inquiry as to the facts, and these led to official investigation which demonstrated the falsity of the tales that were told and the folly of those who repeated them. It also established the good conduct and character of the "Mormon" missionaries, who, giving their time and talents without pay, were carrying the gospel of Christ to all nations, and proved that the Church they represented furnished no means for emigration purposes, or other inducements or persuasions to bring young or old, males or females to Utah. The rebound of public sentiment has helped the cause thus maliciously assailed and attention has been thus turned to the great latter-day work of the Redeemer. Similar results have followed the uprising in other nations, and while some temporary mischief has been wrought, the good that has followed it will be permanent.

Religious toleration is aiding our cause in parts of Switzerland and Germany where local influences had been unfavorable. In Hungary and Austria freedom has been granted to our churches. The work in France is spreading and Paris is now added to our open fields of labor. Holland and Belgium continue to yield good results. Japan presents no hostility to our faithful brethren, who still engage in conquering the obstacles of a difficult language and of customs and ways so foreign to those of the Caucasian race as to seem almost insurmountable, and the fruits of their toil are sufficient to give joyful encouragement. Among the Maories of New Zealand, the Samoans and the Hawaiians of the Pacific Islands, great success is achieved and the gift of languages is a marked and wonderful sign of the workings of the Holy Spirit in this direction.

In our own land the elders are received in every state with respect and attention, and where mobocracy once raged and personal violence was met, hospitality and courtesy greet them and investigation takes the place of derision. Yet there is much misunderstanding of our message and our intents, and many otherwise intelligent people are in dense ignorance of our doctrines and our character. This was glaringly exhibited in the objection raised against the silver service presented by the people of Utah, including thousands of Sunday school children, because one tray in the collection portrayed the monument erected in Salt Lake City to the pioneers of 1847, surmounted by a statue of their

leader, President Brigham Young. The acceptance of the offering suppressed the hysteria excited by misinformation, and the launching of the magnificent vessel with the cognomen of Utah impressed the whole nation favorably towards this commonwealth.

The visit here of President Taft and his inspiring addresses were highly appreciated. His great speech in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Arbitration and Peace, thrilled his immense audience, and found a cordial response in the souls of a people devoted to the cause of universal brotherhood and union. His presence and his keen observation of conditions here aided in bringing about that knowledge of our purposes and patriotic sentiments which is desirable and must result in good to Utah. That which is good for the state is helpful to the cause that is dear to so many of its people, whose love of their country is part of their religion.

The tour of the Tabernacle Choir to New York and other cities of the East has opened the eyes of hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens to the fact that the "Mormons" are not the ignorant, uncultivated people supposed, but are an intelligent part of the great human family, with aims and desires and souls akin to those of the best. Our singers melted the frost and ice of disfavor that prejudice had formed, and their sweet music caused a flow of good feeling that turned sneers and scorn into ringing cheers of welcome and applause. The great charm of their presence and performances was the spirit that inspired their heartfelt harmony which reached the hearts as well as the ears of the listening throngs.

The erection of the Hotel Utah in this city, and other elegant and substantial structures is a standing mark of the utilitarian genius of the system that we seek to promote. Hosts of visitors are thereby impressed with the evidences afforded that the "Mormons" are not mere dreamers or religious zealots, but practical and progressive workers with business minds, ready to adopt all modern methods and developments for the general welfare. That splendid hostelry is the realization of a plan put forth by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the establishment of the Nauvoo House, as "a delightful habitation and a resting place for the weary traveler, that he may contemplate the glory of Zion;" * * * "A good house worthy of all acceptation." It has already effected much good in the desired direction, and while its management and operation are not conducted by the Church, the property itself is a valuable asset and a credit to the Church to which many of the stockholders belong.

The great victory for the temperance cause in Utah, resulting in the abolition of the liquor traffic in all the "Mormon" towns and villages, and with but few exceptions elsewhere in the state, is one of the many causes of rejoicing during the present year, and augurs well for future advancement. The progress made in the cause of education, the additions to our district and high schools

and university under state direction, coupled with the splendid growth and improvement in our Church academies, colleges, normal schools and other institutions of learning, on which large sums of money have been expended, give encouragement to gifted teachers and professors, as well as to the rising generation and their parents who are imbued with the spirit of scholastic training.

The bountiful crops this year, the success that has crowned our sugar industries, the extension of our commercial organizations. the coming together of enterprising people of differing faiths and parties for mutual benefit, the change inaugurated in our methods of civic government, the increasing sentiment against all forms of vice and for the suppression of disorder and crime, the upward movement in our amusements, substituting intellectual recreations for dancing, card-playing and similar diversions, are indications of improvement and progress, in which all lovers of the race may find cause for gladness and thanksgiving.

The work performed in our holy Temples for the living and for the dead has been continued during the year with but slight, yet necessary intermissions, and the interest shown by the Latter-day Saints in the sacred ordinances of salvation is truly pleasing, both to God and man. Genealogical information has been greatly increased, by which the saints have been able to trace their ancestry and join their family links so as to proceed on sure lines in the vicarious work for their departed progenitors, to the joy and satisfaction of all concerned.

While we have had many causes of congratulation since last Xmas, there have also been trials and sorrows to bear. The scythe of death has cut down many stalwart souls; several faithful laborers in foreign fields have laid their weary bodies down while absent from home and loved ones. When practicable their remains have been brought here and laid to rest in their family burial places. The bereaved have the sympathy of all their co-religionists. Prominently among the departed warriors in the army of the Lord are those faithful leaders in Israel, John Henry Smith, counselor in the First Presidency, and John Smith, the Presiding Patriarch. Their presence and influence are sadly missed, but the knowledge that they finished their earthly missions and are needed elsewhere, affords comfort and hope to those who remain in this mortal sphere. Others of the great and good brethren and sisters have joined the hosts on the other side of the veil, and while we feel the pangs of their loss, the multitudes of the good among whom they now mingle are joyful at their presence

The erection, during the past year, of monuments to Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, a sharer with the Prophet Joseph Smith in Divine ordinations and manifestations; to Christian D. Fjelsted, a great Scandinavian missionary; to Orson Pratt, the famous preacher, author, astronomer, philosopher and pioneer, and other mementoes to

illustrate champions of eternal truth, are worthy of this special mention, and presage further memorials in token of our admiration for the virtues and heroic deeds of other departed worthies.

The opportunities that have been accorded by the press for the publication of historical facts and declarations of the truth concerning our faith and works, in refutation of false and libellous magazine and newspaper articles, have been frequent and potent in defense of the right, and are greatly appreciated by fair-minded readers of all persuasions. They are indications of the coming age of peace and good will and the overthrow of error, malice and misrepresentation. We desire to aid with all our powers the spread of true intelligence and the virtues that the Christ taught and exhibited in His life and character, and we gladly hail each Christmas celebration as helpful in the dissemination of the true Christian precepts and spirit.

Festivities on these occasions are timely and to be commended. But they should be tempered with moderation and never indulged in to excess. Let jubilation be rational and merriment be kept within proper bounds. Christmas gifts are suitable when such as the givers can reasonably bestow. The children should be made glad, the poor be remembered, families be united, faults be forgiven, charity extended and animosities be subdued. We offer benedictions to all mankind. God bless the Saints who are under covenant to serve Him always! May His favor go forth to all nations and peoples. May the light of truth prevail against the darkness of this world, and joy and gladness chase the sorrows of troubled hearts and lift the souls of the downtrodden and the weary to heights of heavenly bliss. And may the glad refrain of the angelic host at the Savior's birth become a universal chorus, reverberating over the whole earth, and be materialized in the lives of mankind, paving the way to the coming of the great King to reign forever more! A merry Christmas to all, bringing forth a happy and prosperous New Year!

JOSEPH F. SMITH,
ANTHON H. LUND,
CHARLES W. PENROSE,
First Presidency, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

RING IN THE NEW.

THE fascination which "something new" holds for the human heart is great. The little child tires of its old toy quickly when it anticipates getting a new one. So it is, in a different degree, with adults. Although there is "nothing new under the sun," yet there are things that we call new. A new coat is worn with a degree of pleasure arising from the fact that it is "new." New to us—although its component parts may be much older than ourselves.

One thing is patent to us—that is, we always hail "something new" with the hope that it is something better. A new day is hailed with the hope that we may be better men and women at its close than we are at its opening. So it is with a New Year. We make new resolves. We have new hopes. Although time is but a piece of Eternity broken off for our convenience on this sphere, we hail new time with an acclamation of gladness.

It is true that there is nothing new under the sun. Man himself is older than the everlasting hills. He is just as old as eternity. But "new" is a convenient and very necessary appellation. At the dawning of a new period of time, we are apt to look back and think of old time and old time acquaintances. I do so now with a great degree of pleasure. Although I have made many new friends, I delight to think of the "old friends tried and true," and I would follow the admonition of Shakespeare and "grapple them to my heart with hooks of steel." May the bonds of love ever unite us. I take this opportunity of wishing my many friends in the confines of Old England a prosperous and very happy New Year. May its close see fruition crown their efforts in righteousness.

I would say to them: Be faithful and true to the covenants you have made unto the Lord; hold fast and be not shaken, for the work of the Lord will stand for ever. I would say to those who are investigators of the gospel: Prove the gospel for yourselves, which can only be done by the aid of the Spirit of the Lord. If you seek to know of the truthfulness of this great latter-day work, you shall surely know. Don't take the elders' word for it. Seek to know for yourselves. The word of the Lord says it, and "let God be true and every man a liar." Men may style "Mormonism" as a "new" religion, but it is not so; "it is the old one come again." It is the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the very word of God. If you will investigate it in a spirit of fairness it will prove itself as such.

The coming year will give you new opportunities to probe into the truths of "Mormonism." The tree puts on a new coat, the plant puts on new leaves, and the world is clothed with a beauty which is ever new. Let us make new efforts to realize the weight of the eternal verities by which we are surrounded. As the new day comes, may it bring new light, and may that light broaden out and shine more and more unto the perfect day. May we realize the bestowal of

> "New blessings each returning day
> Which hover around us while we pray.
> New perils past, new sins forgiven,
> New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven."

If these "new thoughts of God" should lead unto a conviction of their truthfulness, then embrace them, and be done with the old wornout speculations of men and live in the light of the new day.

Salt Lake City. AUBREY PARKER.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 1912.

THE NEW YEAR.

STANDING upon the threshold of a New Year, and wondering what will happen as the days come and go, one is deeply impressed with the solemn truth that the present moment only is within our grasp, to do with it good or evil as we may choose. Behind and beyond the swiftly passing moment, we are helpless. The record of the past year, as well for individuals as for the nations of the earth, is made and cannot be changed or modified. The days of 1911 have come and gone forever: they cannot be recalled. Distress of mind, grieving, bitter repentance, anguish of soul will not, cannot bring them back.

Weak mortals may profit by sad experience. Having been struck down by error and sin they may rise to their feet again. Sustained by an indomitable faith, reinforced by the spirit of humility and penitence, they may even conquer the weaknesses, follies and sins of the flesh and obtain forgiveness thereof, but they cannot recall the past. Time is inexorable, and as it swiftly but surely passes away, the acts of men, all their good and evil deeds, go with it and are recorded in the book of life. The committed deed is gone, but its influence remains and enters into the life and character of the individual. We are told in the scriptures that God "cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance." It is abhorrent to Him, the Law-giver. It is repugnant to every righteous soul. It may not be met by apology or excuse. It cannot be condoned, but must be sincerely repented of and forsaken, or will forever stand against the sinner.

The New Year, upon which we have entered, in a sense lies buried deep in obscurity. There are few lines as yet written upon its youthful face. The activities of man, the busy hum of industrial life, the instructive and intensely thrilling events of social occurrences in the great and small communities of the land, have made as yet but little impression upon its smooth, white surface.

What will the record be? No man by mere human wisdom can answer the momentous question. Time only will make clear that which is now dark to mortal minds. This much, however, is known, that all who live, be they rich or poor, high or low, men and women of great virtues or sordid and debasing vices, and even little children—all, all must act their part in the great drama of

life, and their deeds, self chosen, will, taken in the aggregate, constitute the history of the world for 1912—a history which will undoubtedly, as heretofore, be conspicuous for good and evil, and varied and thrilling happenings. The vital question always to be borne in mind is this: However insignificant and apparently unimportant the individual, as compared with the masses, yet his life and conduct not only exert an influence upon himself to exalt or degrade the soul, but have a direct bearing upon the life and history of the whole world.

The gospel of Jesus Christ, which has been restored to the earth again in all its fulness and power, with every gift and authority, as proclaimed by Joseph Smith the prophet and advocated by his followers, will help men to attain to righteousness. It points the way. Its saving power is experienced by the repentant sinner who descends into the waters of baptism. His sins are washed away and he rises to a newness of life. Clothed upon with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, which is given by the imposition of hands, as formerly, he is well equipped to fight against his own weaknesses and imperfections, and to wage battle against the evils of the world.

So vital and pregnant is the message that the disciples of to-day, like those of old, have been commanded by the Lord to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, giving an assurance that those who believe and are baptized will be saved, and those who believe not will be damned.

There are some two thousand missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints now in the field in various parts of the globe. Of this number there are seven hundred laboring in the European mission. A mighty task confronts them for the coming year. Many honest souls are perishing in the midst of man-made religions for the bread of life. They must be reached by the servants of the Lord—these humble elders of Israel—and taught the true way of life, and be led out of spiritual darkness and gloom into the bright and radiant light of the gospel of the Son of God. How important is the obligation. It requires heroic faith and infinite patience to accomplish the work. There must be no faltering or shirking of duty or precious time lost. The fires of persecution may be lighted and burn with unabated fierceness at times, the spirit of agitation may stir the hearts of men to acts of violence, a flood of lies and misrepresentation may be sent forth to the great injury of the innocent—it's no matter, the gospel must be preached in all the world before the end shall come. O, ye elders of Israel, the angels are watching over you, and the eye of the Lord is upon you. Of you it is expected that you will do your duty. Your own salvation and the salvation of others depend upon it. You must give your heart and soul to the cause, yea, even your very power of life, or failure will attend your efforts. It should ever be borne in mind that, although the

Almighty causes the wrath of man to praise Him, yet His great purposes are best accomplished and can only be fully accomplished by and through those—His mortal children—who lead virtuous lives. His Spirit will not dwell in unholy tabernacles. Blessed is the man or woman, blessed are the Latter-day Saints, who, being unspotted with the sins of the world, and constantly resisting the seductive power of evil, go forth in mighty faith to preach the gospel, and thus bring peace and comfort and hope and salvation to those who sit in the regions of spiritual darkness and despair. Great will be their reward, great will be the victory.

And what is victory? As applied to the individual it is perhaps best defined by the following lines:

"When you are forgotten or neglected, or purposely set at naught, and you smile, inwardly, glorying in the insult—that is victory.

"When your good name is evil spoken of, your wishes are crossed, your taste is offended, your advice ridiculed, and you take it all in patient, loving silence—that is victory.

"When you are content with simple raiment, plain food, any climate, any solitude, any interruption—that is victory.

"When you can bear any discord, any annoyance, any irregularity or unpunctuality (of which you are not the cause)—that is victory.

"When you can stand face to face with folly, extravagance, spiritual insensibility, contradiction of sinners, persecution, and endure it all as Jesus endured it—that is victory.

"When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation, nor seek after commendation, when you can truly love to be unknown—that is victory.

"When selfishness is overcome so completely that you can say, even in the face of death, 'not my will but thine be done'—that is supreme victory."

The *Millennial Star*, which is fixed and immovable—a star of the first magnitude—will send a shining ray down through the weeks and months of 1912, but at this, the dawning of the year, it twinkles out a happy greeting to the elders and saints of the European mission and also to its numerous readers. May peace, happiness, and a full measure of prosperity attend them all.

RUDGER CLAWSON.

INDIRECT influence is often far more successful than that which is direct, and for this reason: the direct aims that we make to convert others may be contradicted by our lives; while the indirect influence is our very life. What we really are, somehow or other will ooze out—in tone, in look, in act: and that tells upon those who come into daily contact with us.—F. W. ROBERTSON.

THE SCRIPTURES.

DURING the recent agitation much has been said by the newspapers of the proficiency of our elders as Bible students. Yet, strange to say, the passages used by us in preaching the first principles of the gospel are prominent and few, being taken chiefly from the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Most family libraries in England or elsewhere in Christendom contain Bibles, yet, I venture to say, that in the great majority of homes they are never opened and the knowledge of their contents is about as great as that of the two cowboys, one of whom had a wager up that he could repeat the Lord's Prayer, and started in confidently with, "Now I lay me down to sleep ——" "Well, confound it," interrupted the other, "Here's your money. I didn't think you knew it so well!"

This departure from the study of the scriptures is to a great extent excusable. The men who wrote the books of the Bible lived in different times and lands, and under conditions very unlike those of to-day, and their words have passed through numerous uninspired translations, which have tended to confuse them and make them almost unintelligible in parts. The great apostasy and the ages of spiritual and intellectual darkness which followed also tended to rob the scriptures of their meaning. When Luther came forth with his doctrine of faith without works, and Calvin presented his un-Christian "few-select" idea, they were unquestioned, as they claimed to be teaching from the Bible, and were at least breaking away from the oppressive rule of the Church of Rome. Many admired these men and accepted their doctrine as a matter of course, because in that day few could read and fewer had access to the Bible. Creeds sprang up like mushrooms, in each of which the founders seemed to adopt that part of God's word which was in accord with his own ideas and to reject or ignore the remainder, thereby causing endless confusion regarding many passages.

Now, one reading such a book, and finding himself under the necessity of passing over most parts of it without knowing what they meant, would naturally find it rather uninteresting. As people usually read in order to learn, it would soon be laid aside, as a sort of mystery, and something more intelligible would be taken up. Man has always been religiously inclined, but, as their orthodox studies do not solve their problems, they have turned to science and have formed many theories of their own concerning life.

In view of these conditions, it is clear that more revelation from God is needed in order to correct and complete the word given in the Bible; for without its purity and simplicity the gospel would lose much of its value. The Lord, seeing that the predicted apostasy had taken place and that there was a famine for a know-

ledge of His word and will, gave the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants as the unifying elements which were so necessary to bring the other scriptures together and show them in their true relation. This purpose He states in a revelation to Sidney Rigdon, which says: "And a commandment I give unto thee, that thou shalt write for him (Joseph Smith); and the scriptures shall be given even as they are in mine own bosom to the salvation of mine own elect."

It is as ridiculous to think that the complete and real meaning of isolated texts can be formed without comparison with the sense of the whole plan of salvation as it is to believe that a knowledge of this earth and the great natural laws which govern it can be obtained by a study of one obscure island. But if people will study the Bible with this new light and with an honest desire to know the truth, they will not only find it interesting, but "after many days" will find their eyes being gradually opened to the beautiful harmony and simplicity of the plan by which God has ordained that man shall at length gain his salvation.

Wigan, England. HERMON J. WELLS.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Releases and Departures. — The following named missionaries have been honorably released and sailed for home December 30th, 1911, per s.s. *Lusitania*. From Great Britain—James A. Hind, Robert Shepherd, C. Clyde Brown. From Switzerland and Germany—T. R. Jones.

Sunday School Treat.—On Wednesday, December 27th, 1911, at 6:30 p.m., a very enjoyable time was had by the Birmingham branch Sunday School in the Handsworth Assembly Rooms. A good program was rendered, refreshments were served and prizes were awarded the Sunday School children. An important feature of the evening was a sketch, which was most successfully given by the younger members of the school, under the direction of Sister Lydia M. Champion. There was an exceptionally good attendance of strangers.

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held at the Turkish Baths, Northampton branch (Birmingham conference), on Sunday, December 17th, 1911, when two souls were baptised by Elder H. W. Noble.

On Sunday, December 17th, 1911, a baptismal service was held at the Turkish Baths, High Street, Birmingham, where five persons received the ordinance under the hands of Elders R. Eljan Barber and Albert Smith. The converts were from Nuneaton, Sparkbrook and Birmingham branches (Birmingham conference). Confirmation took place at the baths.

Christmas Tree at Durham House.—The children of the Liverpool and Birkenhead branches were given an enjoyable treat on Boxing Day at Durham House, 295 Edge Lane, Liverpool. The meeting hall was tastefully decorated for the occasion by Elders Nathaniel Ludlow and J. Alonzo Duncan, Brother George Toft, and Sisters Annie Joad and Jennie Souter. The most interesting feature was a Christmas tree, with a gift for each of the little ones. A large number of children were present, as well as many of the parents and friends. A very interesting program was rendered by the little folks, after which Santa Claus appeared and distributed the presents among them. Light refreshments were served by the Relief Society, after which a couple of hours were spent in amusing games. The children and all present had a most enjoyable time.

Relief Society Bazaars.—On Saturday, December 9th, 1911, in the Nottingham branch (Nottingham conference) a bazaar was given under the auspices of the Relief Society. During the evening an elaborate "tea" was served and an excellent program rendered. A "sale of work" proved to be a drawing card, a big variety of contributed work being disposed of. A very pleasing incident was the donation of two guineas to the society for the occasion, by Captain J. A. Morrison, a Member of Parliament. A sum of £7 2s. 7d. above expenses was realized.

On Friday, December 22nd, 1911, at 106 Ann Street, Belfast (Irish conference), a bazaar was held under the auspices of the Belfast Relief Society, at which a sum of seven pounds and thirteen shillings was realized.

District Meeting.—A district meeting was held in Unity Building, Smyth Street, Wakefield (Leeds conference), on Sunday, December 17th, 1911. President Fred C. Parker, Elder Austin H. Shaw (clerk of conference), and Elders George B. Sheffield and Edwin L. Fullmer were in attendance. Words of welcome were offered by Elder George B. Sheffield, who invoked the blessings of the Lord upon all present. Elder Austin H. Shaw explained the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the necessity of revelation. A duet, "Light after Darkness," was very beautifully rendered by Sisters Annie Fall and Harriet Longdon. President Parker then compared the teachings of the Latter-day Saints with those of other churches. Bore a strong testimony to the Divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Elder George B. Sheffield showed the necessity of faith and works in order to obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of God. The meeting was well attended by saints and friends. All had a time of rejoicing, and felt well repaid for their attendance.

Branch Conferences.—President Willard Richards and Elders

Hugh B. Graham and James E. Chapman of the Aberdeen branch (Scottish conference) met with the saints and friends in a branch conference on Sunday, December 10th, 1911. On the following Sunday, December 17th, 1911, a similar meeting was held at Dundee by President Richards and Elders Gilbert Powelson and Charles V. Kimball. Both meetings were well attended, and a good spirit prevailed.

On Sunday, December 24th, 1911, a very successful branch conference was held at St. Stephen's Chambers, Norwich (Norwich conference). The morning session commenced at 10:30, with the officers of the Sunday School in charge. Lectures and exercises were beautifully rendered by the members of the school. The afternoon session commenced at 2:30. President F. B. Hammond, thirteen elders and a goodly number of saints were in attendance. Elder Byron Mendenhall related his experiences while traveling from the valleys of the mountains, and admonished all to live up to the requirements of the gospel. Elder Ernest Carter spoke of the pleasure to be realized in preaching the gospel. Bore a strong testimony to the truth of the same. Elder Atkin, from Canada, expressed in fitting words the joy he felt in having the privilege of once more meeting the saints in Norwich after nineteen years separation from them. Exhorted all to seek light from the Giver of all good gifts and spoke of the great vicarious work for the dead. Sister E. Woods bore a strong testimony to the virtuous lives of the saints of God. Said she had been blessed with the privilege of going to Salt Lake City and returning again, and she knew the stories that have been circulated about the Church and its people to be false. Elder Robert Shepherd addressed the meeting on the life of Christ and His mission among men. There were present at the evening meeting one hundred and twenty-five saints and investigators. Elder Vance D. Walker presented the names of the general and local authorities, which were unanimously sustained. Elder J. L. Broadbent spoke at length on the second coming of Christ, which would take place after the many signs and wonders in the heavens were brought to pass, as had been predicted by many of the ancient prophets. President F. B. Hammond spoke at length on the reasonableness of the beliefs of the Latter-day Saints. Showed that God is a real and tangible being. Encouraged all to live up to the light of truth and reason. Benediction by Brother George E. Southgate.

Successful Socials.—A successful social was held on Thursday evening, December 16th, 1911, in the Miners' Institute, Birdwell (Sheffield conference), in honor of Elder C. Clyde Brown, who has been honorably released to return home. A delightful program was rendered, and those who attended expressed themselves as having enjoyed the evening's entertainment.

On Wednesday, December 20th, 1911, at Forester's Hall, Hull,

the saints and friends of the Hull branch (Hull conference), celebrated Christmas with a good social. From an artistic standpoint the program was one of the best rendered this year, and all present expressed themselves as being delighted with the party.

A very successful social was held in the large Westfield Hall, Gateshead branch (Newcastle conference), on Thursday evening, December 21st, 1911. A large number of saints and friends from various parts of the conference were present. An enjoyable program, consisting of songs, recitations and games was rendered. A choice and generous supply of fruit was served.

On Tuesday, December 26th, 1911, a very successful Christmas party was given by the Carlisle branch (Newcastle conference) to all the saints and friends in this part. We were favored with selections from the organ, banjo and piccolo, as well as vocal solos and recitations. Dancing was also indulged in. A large Christmas tree stood in the corner of the hall, beautifully decorated and with sufficient presents for everyone present. All expressed themselves as being highly pleased. About fifty people were in attendance.

A farewell social in honor of Elder James R. Anderson, and Christmas party for the Barnsley and Wombwell branches (Sheffield conference), was held in the Arcade Hall, Barnsley, on December 26th, 1911. Refreshments were served, a musical program was rendered and games were indulged in to a late hour. All present had an enjoyable time.

On Wednesday, December 27th, 1911, the saints and friends of the Stroud branch (Bristol conference), held a very enjoyable social in honor of Elder Ralph D. Smuin, who has been honorably released to return to his home in Zion. An interesting program was rendered, many friends taking part, after which refreshments were served and games played. The branch presented Elder Smuin with a beautiful present in appreciation of his labors with them the past six months. All join in wishing him God-speed on his homeward journey.

At West Hartlepool (Newcastle conference) on December 28th, 1911, a most successful social was given in honor of the Sunday School children. There were in attendance about one hundred and fifty saints and friends. The main feature of the evening was Santa Claus, who made his appearance at 10 p.m., presenting to each of the Sunday School children a small present, which he took from a beautifully decorated Christmas tree. During a short intermission refreshments were served and a social chat was pleasantly indulged in. All expressed themselves as having a very pleasant time.

A very successful "tea" and farewell social was tendered Elders Robert Shepherd, James A. Hind, Vance D. Walker and S. C. Kelsey, on Thursday, December 28th, 1911, at the St. Stephen's Chambers, Norwich (Norwich conference). Each elder was presented with a handsome traveling rug as a token of love and

friendship from the elders and saints. After a well rendered program, many games were indulged in with true sociability. The occasion will be long remembered by those present.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR THEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

LESSON XXI.—AS A LITTLE CHILD.

General references: Matt. 18: 1; Mark 9: 33-37; Luke 9: 46-47; 22: 24.

I. A CHILD PRESENTED AS THE TYPE OF GREATNESS.

1. The occasion and its lessons: (a) Disputations among the apostles. (b) Their question: "Who is the greatest?" (c) Their erroneous conception of "the kingdom of heaven." (d) Their selfish ambition rebuked,—the first in rank must be the humblest. (e) True greatness not marked by proud display. (Luke 22: 24).
2. A later incident (Luke 18: 15-17; Matt. 19: 13-15; Mark 10: 13-16). (a) Children brought to be blessed. (b) The mistaken zeal of the disciples. (c) The Savior's instruction: "Suffer little children to come * * * for of such is the kingdom of God."

II. CHILDREN PRECIOUS BEFORE THE LORD.

1. Their rights protected (Matt. 18: 6, 10). (a) Angels represent them in heaven. (b) Sin of taking advantage of child's weakness. (c) Little children belong to the kingdom without baptism; infant baptism unscriptural; (read "Articles of Faith" 6: 13; consult especially Moroni 8).

III. CHILDREN HONORED.

1. An instance after the resurrection—(III Nephi 17: 11).
2. The Father's will that not one should perish (Matt. 18: 14). Illustrated by parable: (a) The sheep that was lost. (b) The successful search. (c) The joy that followed.

DIED.

OLIVER.—At West Hartlepool (Newcastle conference), December 8th, 1911, Richard Oliver, the beloved husband of Sister Jane Oliver, aged 73 years.

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